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100 Years at a Glance

By Geo. A. W. Vogel

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GREENFIELD, IOWA



1856 --- 1956

by

GEO. A. W. VOGEL

A History of Greenfield, Iowa

1856-1956

History, says Macaulay, has its foreground and its background, and it is principally in the management of its perspective that one artist differs from another. Some events must be presented on a large scale, others diminished; the great majority will be lost in the dimness of the horizon, and a general idea of their joint effect will be given by a few slight touches.

A "few slight touches," are to follow, then, on the history of Greenfield, Iowa. A pleasant community, this, dear to thousands. Here stood their cradle. Here they lived and moved about and had their being. They married and had their families. Some moved elsewhere but never forgot our community and town, its atmosphere of home. Though the names of most of us will not be prominent in the annals of the illustrious, in our way we made history, and here is the sacred spot where we made it. "The fullest and best ears of corn hang lowest toward the ground." The test of a community's worth is not its census, nor its size, nor its material worth, but its populace, the people that live within its confines, and the kind of sons and daughters it turns out.

As history goes, this community of ours is still very young. The great state of Iowa was officially opened to the white settler with the "Black Hawk Purchase" in 1832. This meant a strip of land about fifty miles wide west of the Mississippi River. In less than twenty years the Indian was completely dispossessed, and the white man had pushed the Indian out of Iowa.

1856 — GREENFIELD, IOWA — 1956

THIS LOCATION

The site where Greenfield now is located formed a vast prairie in prehistoric days. It was not traversed by mighty streams nor dotted by lakes. Here roamed the elk, the red deer, the buffalo, and found verdant pasture. Along the creeks

were found the beaver, the mink, and other furbearers. The Indian was here, but never in great numbers, the arrowheads he cast aside attest this fact. There is no evidence that this was disputed territory and that battles were fought over it. It is estimated that about the beginning of the 19th century there were never more than about 8,000 red-men in all Iowa. That would spread him rather thin in this area. Here he came to live, to hunt, to escape the inter-tribal conflicts. Here and there were found a collection of four or five tepees, still seen by early pioneers on their westward trek. This haven was his home, and when he left, the white man found this area a most pleasant home with no less enchantment. Here was also a thoroughfare for the traveler, and no less than three times was this area traversed by groups and individuals. When the Sac and Fox Indians were assigned land in Kansas, it is not improbable that some touched this area on their exodus. The Mormons on their way west left their trails, 1846-1852. Last, but not least notable, the "Underground Railway" of pre-Civil War days touched this very spot. The slaves were helped into "free" territory from Missouri via Tabor, to Lewis, through Greenfield, to Winterset, Des Moines, Grinnell, Iowa City, and Clinton. This took place in the later 1850's.

1856 — GREENFIELD, IOWA — 1956

THE FIRST SETTLERS

Iowa was admitted into the Union on December 28, 1846, as the 29th state, during the presidency of James K. Polk. It is not easy to establish to whom the honor goes for having been the first to locate in this area. The early settler rarely kept a diary and left no written records, much to the dismay of the historian. It would appear that the distinction goes to Thomas Johnson, a native of Indiana. He first settled in Page County in 1841, and in 1849, three years after Iowa became a state, he was attracted by this fair territory and settled on Section 4, in what is now Washington Township, the Bridgewater neighborhood. Here he built a cabin, broke up a small patch of ground, and raised a small crop of grain and vegetables in support of his family. In 1850 he erected a primitive gristmill on his farm, and in 1854 he built a small sawmill. In 1853 a mail route was established through Washington Township, on the route from Afton to Lewis. Johnson was appointed postmaster, and the office was in his cabin. The first white child born in what is now Adair County was Margaret John-

son, daughter of Thomas and Rosa Johnson, in May of 1850. In the Johnson cabin, also, the first school was taught in the winter of 1851-1852.

Among other "first" settlers is to be numbered James R. Campbell, who came in the spring of 1850, and settled on Section 3, also in Washington Township. Another was William McDonald. He came in the fall of 1849 and located his homestead on Section 26 in Harrison Township. The early settlers came from Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Missouri, Illinois, three of whom were foreign-born, in England, Switzerland, and Germany. Among them are numbered William Alcorn, John Gibson, Daniel Vancil, George M. Holdaday, Azariah Root, Charles Wilson, Christian Gerken, John Cears, John Gilman, Jacob Bruce. In 1854 there were 150 inhabitants in Adair County.

1856 — GREENFIELD, IOWA — 1956

ADAIR COUNTY

The state of Iowa was surveyed and laid out in counties in 1851. Land offices had been established as early as 1838, and land sold for \$1.25 per acre. The money so realized was used by the Government to defray the costs of the War of 1812. With the advent of the railroads land went up to \$2.50 per acre. Adair County as now existing was created by an act of the 3d General Assembly of the Iowa legislature, approved January 15, 1851. It was called Adair in honor of General John Adair, an officer in the War of 1812, and sixth governor of Kentucky. The county seat was named Summerset, now Fontanelle. The first court was held in the house of Judge J. J. Leeper. At a session of the Court on July 7, 1856, it was ordered that a court house be built 26x36 feet and 10 feet high, to contain three rooms, "all to be finished in good style."

1856 — GREENFIELD, IOWA — 1956

GREENFIELD

The first to settle in the territory now comprising the town of Greenfield were Thomas Hodgeson and a man by the name of Hillin in 1854, and they located on the SW. quarter of Sec. 7 of what is now Greenfield Township. They constructed pole cabins, apparently only of temporary nature since neither owned the land on which they settled.

Nothing further is known of Hillin, but there is evidence that Hodgeson still was in the community three years later. This quarter section was sold by the State of Iowa, to David Lamb on May 25, 1885, as the first owner. In the same year Lamb sold it to Thomas Hobson, and on March 10, 1856, Hobson sold it to Milton C. Munger, apparently an enterprising type of citizen. In September of the same year Munger engaged the services of D. M. Valentine, the County Surveyor, to plat the town, and filed for record, Sept. 30, 1856. The town site was bounded on the north by Grant Street, formerly North; on the east by East 5th Street, formerly Pleasant (one block west of Highway 25); on the south by Mills, formerly Stella; on the west by West 4th, formerly Sherman. The following year Munger sold one-third interest in the newly platted town to Matthew Clark. Clark at once erected a stage coach station where now is located the Ehram Implement Co. The building was constructed of native hewn planks with a canvas roof. The name Greenfield was chosen, apparently, because the location was green and luxuriant. In 1856 the State of Iowa had a population of 519,055, and another town was born.

1856 — GREENFIELD, IOWA — 1956

TRANSPORTATION

The stage station, the first business establishment to locate in Greenfield, calls to mind the mode of public transportation of the early traveler. The hardy pioneer came by wagon, drawn by oxen or horses, on horse-back, often on foot. The ferries over the larger streams were often of the rudest description. Often the immigrant, and the stages, were compelled to ford the creeks, or the settler would raft himself and his few and precious belongings across rivers and creeks. Some wagons were ferried across in small Indian canoes that were lashed together. The wheels of one side of the wagon were placed in one canoe, and the wheels of the other side in the other canoe, and then paddled across, the cattle and horses or oxen swimming by the side of this improvised ferry. Stage coaches would at times upset in mid-stream. The "coaches" ranged all the way from farmers' wagons to the aristocratic "Concord" coach. These had a seating capacity for nine passengers, with baggage (and even passengers) on top. The fares ranged from 5c to 7c per mile. Stations were located from ten to fifteen

miles apart for changing horses, usually four to each coach. Greenfield was on the route from Des Moines, via Winterset, Lewis, to Council Bluffs, known as Kanessville in pioneer days. The arrival of a stage was an event anywhere along the route. People stood in front of the stopping place and met the stage, looking for new arrivals, visitors, letters, news from the outside world, newspapers. There was keen competition among the stagelines to carry the U. S. Mails. When roads and trails were impassable, the mail came by post riders, but the newspapers and magazines remained bogged down with the coaches. In 1858 the "Council Bluffs Bugle" wrote, "We are sickened at the sight of every mail that arrives. When the agent is asked why this repeated occurrence of destroying the mail, they offer the same silly stereotyped reply that the stage upset in the creek." . . . The Adair County Register (Fontanelle) of October 1868 reported an accident in which a stage coach broke through a bridge about two miles east of Greenfield. The coach dropped about eight feet into water and mud. It was with difficulty that one of the horses was extricated, but saved. The coach had four passengers, two of whom were ladies. All escaped without injury except for some bruises and a bad scare.

1856 — GREENFIELD, IOWA — 1956

THE HOTEL

An essential adjunct to the stage station was the hotel. Stages could not run on perfect schedule owing to weather conditions, break-downs, and other unavoidable delays. The fares did not include stop-overs, and it was not infrequent that passengers had to wait for the coach that first left the next day. There was no telegraph, and connections were haphazard. The hotel was an essential convenience for the coach traveler. The rates were about \$2.00 for board and lodging, with portable conveniences and always without bath. It is only a natural development in the history of Greenfield that a hotel was erected. This took place in 1858, and it was called the Kirkwood Hotel. It was also an establishment of Matthew Clark who had built the stage station. The first post office was housed in the stage station, and Matthew Clark was the first postmaster. The post office was moved to the new hotel, Clark continuing in office. Here, then, was a budding little location—Greenfield. The present hotel

was built by a number of Greenfield businessmen at a cost of \$60,000 in 1920. But this was only the beginning. New settlers were coming from the east and the south—and they stayed.

1856 — GREENFIELD, IOWA — 1956

THE FIRST STORE

The first store was opened by A. P. Littleton in June, 1859, in the same building which first housed Clark's stage coach station. Upon completion of the hotel, the stage stopped there. Littleton's store carried general merchandise in the front room. In the fall of the same year he removed to a small building east of the square and enlarged his stock to include groceries, dry goods, hardware, boots and shoes, and even millinery. He drove to St. Joseph, Mo., for his stock, a two-weeks undertaking. Later Littleton became postmaster. He opened a school in his house, and so was the first teacher as well as also the first mayor. The second store was opened by C. P. Gilbert. This store also carried drugs. The third establishment was the harness shop of Charles Bishop, in 1870. The fourth was a general merchandise establishment by the Hutchinson Brothers, in 1873. The first blacksmith shop was established in 1859 by H. W. Blakely. Franklin Letts was another early blacksmith. We should mention also that Bishop had a blacksmith shop in connection with the harness shop. Thereafter new business establishments came, old ones changed hands, but the foregoing were among the "firsts."

1856 — GREENFIELD, IOWA — 1956

THE COUNTY SEAT "WAR"

The County Seat "war" rocked this thriving and peaceful village about this time. In 1855 three state commissioners located the county seat in Fontanelle (Summerset, as it was called). The following year the town of Greenfield was laid out near the center of the county. Soon the people of Greenfield presented petitions asking that the county seat be located here. But the Civil War broke out, and no further action was taken on the petitions. In the fall of 1865, the same question was submitted to the voters of the county and lost by a vote of 139 to 130. Four years later the same question was again decided in favor of Fontanelle, but in 1874 the election by a vote of 852 to 500 decided to move the

county seat to Greenfield. The removal of the records, however, was delayed by court injunction. The case was carried to higher courts, and the Supreme Court of Iowa finally held for Greenfield, but the records were to remain in Fontanelle until some legal technicalities were to be settled in the court at Council Bluffs. But the Greenfield people just could not wait and without ceremony placed the furniture and the records on wagons and took them to Greenfield. On the day after, Judge Mitchell held court and asked that the furniture and the records be restored. The sheriff with the written order of the court went to Greenfield to retrieve the records. But, when trying to convince the perpetrators of the foray, he lost the judge's orders and had to return without success. The next day he failed again. N. B. Baker, the adjutant general, then came upon the scene and ordered the return of the records until all legal matters had taken their course and were settled. This was done, and the records remained in Fontanelle until June 24, 1875, when the Supreme Court announced that Greenfield was the legal county seat of Adair County. Greenfield then donated the courthouse to the county. It was located where the Warren building, the Golden Rule, now is located. The following year the town of Greenfield became incorporated.

1856 — GREENFIELD, IOWA — 1956

THE 1883 FIRE

About 5:00 a.m., the rear portion of the bakery was discovered on fire. It was located on the site of the present bakery. Alarm was given at once, but with no fire organization and no facilities for fighting a fire, it seemed a hopeless task and almost inevitable that the greater part of Greenfield would be reduced to ashes, at least the southeast part of the square. Fortunately there was little wind, and a slight shower was falling. The fire soon spread to the stable in the rear, then it swept its way to the north to take the meat market, the barber shop, the land office, and the courthouse. Today this is the location from the bakery to the Golden Rule store. At the same time the fire leaped across the alley south to the stable of the Methodist parsonage. Then it went westward with the possibility of destroying the other quarter block. Much heroic valor was in evidence. A line was formed, buckets of water passed from hand to hand in steady stream. Only three establishments westward were destroyed.

THE COURTHOUSE

Immediately after the 1883 fire another courthouse was built. It was poorly constructed and only of temporary nature at best. It was not nearly as good as the one destroyed by the fire and was known by the name of "sheep shed." It was built by the county. In 1891 the present courthouse was built. The building was completed and accepted on March 25, 1892. The total cost, including equipment was \$26,768. The present jail was erected in 1903 at a cost of \$11,990.

1856 — GREENFIELD, IOWA — 1956

THE RAILROAD

An era of railroad building was ushered in after the Civil War. In 1866 the Board of Supervisors appropriated some \$800 toward making a railroad survey through Adair County. Nothing tangible came of this, but in 1867 the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific laid out a road along the line dividing Adair and Guthrie counties. The road was built the following year and reached Council Bluffs in 1869. Although some seventeen miles distant, this railroad became a great outlet for stock, grain, produce of the county. In 1879 a branch of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy, then known as "The Creston and Northern" reached Greenfield, with its terminal at Fontanelle. Greenfield now had direct connections with the mainline of the Burlington at Creston, and it was apparent that Greenfield's transportation problems had been solved. Four passenger trains and the necessary freight trains furnished excellent service for the passenger and shipping needs and insured Greenfield a promising future. The age of railroad building in Iowa came to an end in Iowa in 1920. The automobile and the motor bus gradually took over. Local passenger service was gradually eliminated. This was ushered in particularly by the era of highway paving. While the modern paved highway made an end to the local passenger train, it ushered in the motor bus. The Burlington Bus Lines reached Greenfield in the 30's. American Trailways reaches Greenfield with three buses east and west daily. Transportation and industry are closely allied. It was only natural that the advent of the railroad to Greenfield brought the grain elevator that same year. It was erected at a cost of \$4,000, was three stories high, and had a floor area of 24x48 feet. Two years later extended improvements and enlargement raised its valuation to \$6,000.

It was modern in every way according to prevailing standards, with a capacity of 12,000 bushels of grain in its bins. The corncribs were connected with the elevator by drag belt to the corn sheller that had a capacity of shelling 5,000 bushels per day. The Scholes Brothers were the proprietors. Now the farming community had an outlet in its very front yard. Four years later, in 1883, came the first creamery. It was a basement structure, 24x30 feet in area. It churned an average of 400 pounds of butter per day. By way of comparison, the present creamery in 1954 produced 735,382 pounds.

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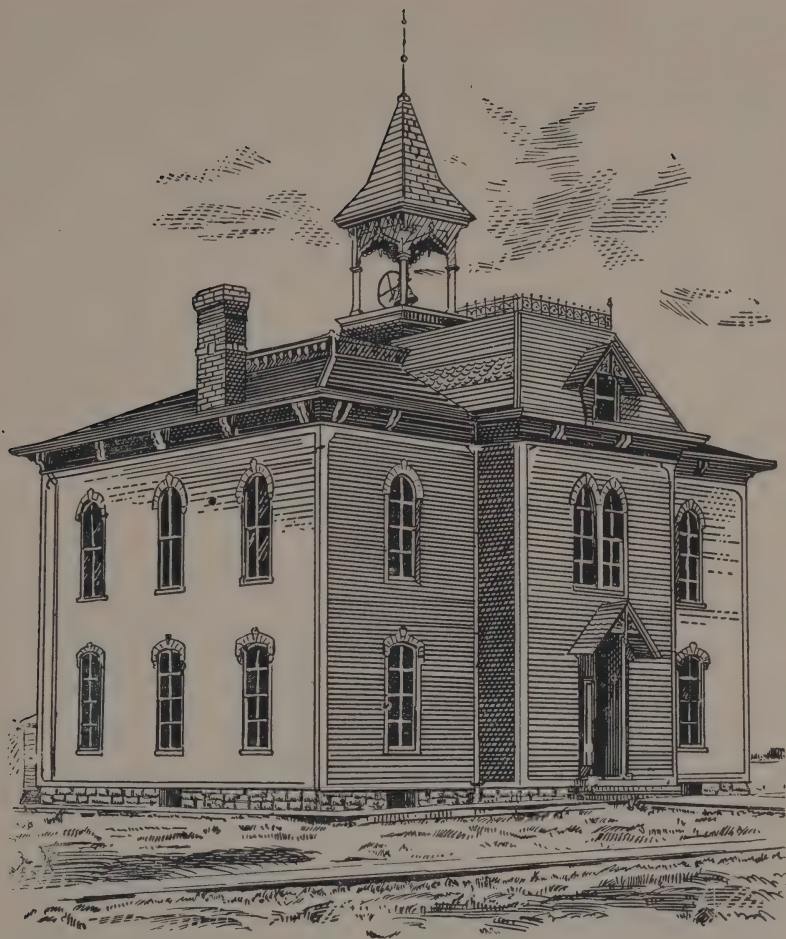
EARLY PROFESSIONAL MEN

The limits of this publication do not permit the listing of all professional men in pioneer days, much less of the present. Among the medical men, the first to locate here was Dr. Edginton, also spelled Edinton, in 1864. Dr. Arthur R. Bracket practiced here for a while, as did Dr. Charles E. Stoner. Dr. E. Spooner was a prominent physician. Toward the end of the past century Drs. F. P. Culverson, John E. Howe, A. W. Vaughn were established in their professional practice. We have no record of the first dentist. Pioneer doctors extracted teeth. The first lawyer to locate in Greenfield was T. W. Neville in 1869. J. C. McDermot located here in 1875. Then there were J. C. Naylor, John A. Storey, Harry E. Don Carlos, James E. Andrews, Daniel W. Church, A. L. Hager, F. M. Brown, Robert Mickey, Fred O. Hinkson, William S. Wishard, Frank B. Wilson, J. C. Hoyt, George D. Musmaker, up to about the close of the 19th century. The last attempt at writing the history of Adair County and Greenfield was back in 1915. Perhaps the time is ripe for another attempt to bring the annals of the community to date.

1856 — GREENFIELD, IOWA — 1956

THE SCHOOLS

The first school in the village of Greenfield was opened and taught by A. D. Littleton in the winter of 1859, in the same building which was originally the stage station. It's rather significant that the first building to be erected here should serve also in this capacity. The first schoolhouse was erected in 1861, when the town was a sub-district of



Greenfield Township. On March 10, 1877, an election was held on petition asking that Sections 7, 8, 17, 18 of Greenfield Township, and 12 and 13 of Summerset Township form an independent District. The petition was approved by a vote of 42 to 9. In the same year a bond issue carried by a vote of 40 to 10 for the erection of the South Ward school for \$5,000. In the summer of 1883 the North Ward school was built at a cost of \$6,000. At a meeting of the Greenfield Commercial Club, held in the courtroom on March 19, 1906, the move was made to erect a new high school building to cost \$25,000. In July of that year the School Board let the contract for the erection of the new building on the South Ward school grounds. The general contract bid was

\$16,700. Today this is the grade and junior high building. The building served its purpose until the erection of the present high school building in 1925, at a cost of \$110,000. The 1955-1956 enrollment in all the Greenfield schools was 406 in the grades and 294 in high school. In 1955 a consolidation program was adopted after it had been defeated in a previous election. The consolidation so voted enlarges the Greenfield Independent District to include 153 sections. By way of comparison, the original District embraced an area of 6 sections back in 1877. The measure as approved by the voters calls for the erection of a new grade school on a new site to be acquired after a \$595,000 bond issue has been voted in 1956. The Greenfield Independent District will then be able to serve 275 pupils in its high school, and 580 in the grades.

1856 — GREENFIELD, IOWA — 1956



THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

The first move to establish a public library occurred in July, 1896. There the matter rested till April, 1915, when the ladies of the Progress Club were successful in their demand that a vote be taken for a public library. The women voted 180 to 68 for the library, while the men voted 158 to 124 against. On the following year, in 1916, the

present building was erected and the library was opened. The library was operated from the beginning under the regulations of the Andrew Carnegie library foundation and benefited by its funds. Besides a working arrangement with the State Traveling Library, there are 10,847 volumes on its shelves, and the leading current magazines in its reading room. There are 1,144 active borrowers. Next to its schools, the library is the educational pride of Greenfield. Mrs. Lalla Cornell is the librarian.

1856 — GREENFIELD, IOWA — 1956

THE GREENFIELD CHURCHES

In 1858, when the population of Adair County was only 624, in the cold of winter, Rev. J. M. Rust (Rush) from Lewis, Iowa, preached the first sermon in Greenfield. He was a pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the service was conducted in the home of S. K. Mallory. This marked the beginning of the Methodist congregation in Greenfield. During the summer of 1859, the Rev. Hulbert from the Quincy (the former name of Corning) Circuit served as pastor.

The Lutherans first located in Fontanelle and Prussia Township, and missionary pastors Scheuerle and Weiss from Ft. Dodge ministered to them. Immanuel Lutheran congregation now in Greenfield was organized in 1874, in Prussia Township. In the winter of 1912 Zion Lutheran Church was organized in Greenfield, and in 1927 it amalgamated with Immanuel Lutheran Church, Prussia Twp., and the present church edifice was erected. The parsonage was acquired in 1921.

The Presbyterian Church dates back to May 17, 1874. The Rev. H. H. Kellog from Guthrie, as Menlo then was called, was the first Presbyterian to conduct services here. About the middle of the 70's the United Presbyterians founded a congregation here. This congregation no longer exists. In 1910 its church building was acquired by the Presbyterians and annexed to their church edifice.

The Roman Catholic Congregation in Greenfield took its beginning when Father James Foley from Stuart began holding Mass in the Hohmeyer home in 1878. The congregation was founded, however, in 1906 under the direction of Father Alban Rudroff from Afton, Iowa. The church was built during the same year.

The Greenfield Gospel Chapel was located here in 1951, and is the place of worship of an assembly, formed in 1936, sometimes referred to as "The Plymouth Brethren." The assembly first met in the old "Christian" church. In 1943 the Seventh Day Adventists acquired their house of worship north of the square, under the direction of Rev. B. L. Andersen, now being served by non-resident pastors. Among the churches that once were located in Greenfield but no longer exist are the Baptist, founded in 1874; the United Presbyterian, founded in about 1875; and the Disciples of Christ, known as the "Christian" church.

1856 — GREENFIELD, IOWA — 1956

THE CALL TO ARMS

At the outbreak of the Civil War, 1861-1865, Adair County had a population of 984. This small population found it difficult to muster a large number of recruits. This was a rural community, and most of the men were heads of families. It amazes us that 88 men enlisted and were accredited to Adair County, and it saddens every patriot that twenty of them did not return. They lost their lives either in action or by natural causes. (Significantly, today at this writing, the last surviving Union Army veteran of the Civil War, Albert Woolson, died in Duluth, Minnesota, at the age of 109.) These twenty died not in vain, but who are we, that they should die, and we enjoy the benefits? The Veteran speaks, but his language is not always understood.

In the Spanish-American War of 1898 there were 30 enlistments from Adair County, two of whom brought the supreme sacrifice, Hays Hendry of Bridgewater and Fred Carver of Fontanelle.

In World War I, 1917-1918, Adair County furnished 706 soldiers, thirty of whom did not return. Lloyd Head was the first casualty, on July 15, 1918. Many of those who returned are still with us, and it is the historian's advice to the young in particular that they speak to them in person and hear first-hand.

World War II, 1941-1946, the conflict most of us remember well. In the Adair County court house are posted 1,380 names of men who served our Country in World War II, and that does not include the Korean conflict. Of these 44 men did not return and are so designated by a gold star. Tabulations are a slow process, and the final figures, we are told, are not as yet available.

NEWSPAPER

The first newspapers were in Fontanelle, the county seat. The need for a local paper became apparent with the location of the county seat in Greenfield. The honor goes to Charles Stuart. He procured a press, some type, and the necessary office equipment and had them shipped across the country from Stuart. He secured the services of J. J. Flynn, then editor of the Stuart Locomotive, to superintend the venture. The press was located in the upper room of the A. P. Littleton building; the type was hastily set; and on July 2, 1875, the first issue of the Greenfield Transcript appeared. It was an eight-column folio, and one side was published and printed in Chicago. Mr. Flynn was the nominal editor, but lack of time and his interests in Stuart made it necessary for him to secure the services of a young attorney in Greenfield, Joseph McDermot who largely performed the active work as editor. In 1889 the Reporter of Fontanelle merged with the Transcript. In the same year E. J. Sidey established the Adair County Democrat and was eminently successful in the journalistic field, increasing the circulation to more than 2,000. In 1907 the name of the paper was changed to Adair County Free Press. Increased patronage of the paper made imperative the construction of the new building in 1903, as well as the installation of modern newspaper equipment. More recently more space for storage and equipment was added. The present publisher is Kenneth H. Sidey, the son of the founder; and editor is Edwin J. Sidey, the founder's grandson. It's a weekly with a circulation of 3,500.

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CLUBS AND FRATERNAL ORDERS

The Greenfield Lodge of the I. O. O. F. was instituted on January 30, 1878. Crusade Lodge of the Masonic Order was organized on July 5, 1878. A building Association of these two orders was organized in 1883. Homer Gaines constructed a brick building, and the Association built the second story for their meetings. In 1931 the Masonic Temple was built west of the square. Both these lodges have their auxiliary groups, the Order of Eastern Star and the Rebekah lodge, respectively. Among the organizations which are a part of a national organization are Chapter CA of the P.E.O. Sisterhood; Myers Relief Corps, ladies auxiliary to the



G. A. R.; the Woman's Christian Temperance Union; Head-Endres Post American Legion, and the Ladies Auxiliary; Oak Grove 117 Supreme Woodmen Circle; B. O. W. Club for Boys (Woodmen of the World); Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. The women's groups include Ladies Wednesday Afternoon Club (organized some 60 years ago), Progress Club, Mother's Club, Greenfield Woman's Club (four departments), Greenfield Business Women's Club, the Garden Club and Home Arts Club. Then there are the Service Club, the Country Club, and the Lions.

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GREENFIELD BANKS

Dan Heaton and wife came to Greenfield sometime prior to 1875. Mr. Heaton opened a bank, the Adair County Bank, on the north side of the square. Mrs. Heaton assisted him. It was opened in December of 1875 as a private institution and has continued without interruption to the present day. The original building that housed the bank was replaced when a pretentious structure, a Greenfield landmark, took its place in 1891. That structure gave way to the present structure in 1952 with its excellent equipment and facilities. Its resources exceed four million dollars. Two banks other than the Adair County Bank operated in Greenfield but discontinued in business. The Citizens Bank was organized in 1880 and became the First National Bank in 1900. The Greenfield Savings Bank was organized in 1913.

TOWN IMPROVEMENTS

The pride and character of a community is evidenced by the general appearance of its buildings, store fronts, streets, sidewalks, the condition of its public buildings and parks. In 1911 the town square and a total of about eight blocks were surfaced with permanent concrete paving. The hitching chain was removed, and the business district was permanently "out of the mud." The next year about a mile of paved streets was added, and in 1953 an additional 60 blocks of paving were added. Today there are about 100 blocks of paved streets. There are two municipal parks. One is located two blocks north of the business district and is provided with a new shelter house. Two blocks farther is the site of the Greenfield Municipal Swimming Pool. The swimming pool was constructed during the summer of 1941 as a W. P. A. project, which furnished \$31,300 of the funds needed. Greenfield matched this amount by \$12,000. In 1950 the Adair County Memorial Hospital with a 29-bed capacity was located here at a cost of \$367,000. This is the pride, not only of Greenfield, but of the entire county. In 1909 contract was let for the construction of a modern system of waterworks. In 1935 the Nodaway Lake area was acquired two miles southwest. The dam and spillway were completed the following year, insuring Greenfield an adequate supply of water. In 1955 two deep wells were added. The original electric light plant dates back to 1890. In 1910 the city installed ornamental electroliers around the public square, and more recently before all churches and on the highway. The telephone system has always been privately owned and operated under franchise. The telephone was first patented by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876. The first local system was established in Greenfield in 1896. There were about twenty telephones. In 1931 natural gas was piped to Greenfield, after a franchise had been voted in February of that year. A volunteer Fire Department was organized in 1926 and a modern fire truck was acquired. The truck was replaced in 1938 with the present one. In 1948 the rural fire truck became an excellent addition to the community's fire-fighting equipment.

Greenfield's city limits comprise an area of 1,138.68 acres. The assessed value is \$2,063,467. The 1950 U. S. Census lists its population at 2,102. It is located at an altitude of 1,368 ft. on the divide of the Missouri and the Mississippi river basins, about 58 miles southwest from Des

Mones, on the intersection of highways 92 and 25. The present mayor is Dean Don Carlos. E. E. Stowell is the city clerk. The councilmen are F. L. Faber, Ray White, Lawrence Fox, John Wietzke, Robert Donnellan. R. J. Green is the superintendent of schools. Ed. Miller is fire chief.

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GREENFIELD AND ADAIR COUNTY POPULATION

YEAR	ADAIK COUNTY	GREENFIELD
1854	150	
1856	663 (364M, 299F)	
1860	984	
1863	1,007	
1870	3,382	
1875	7,045	
1880	11,667	
1885	14,102	684
1890	14,534	1,100
1895	15,504	1,048
1900	16,192	1,244
1905	15,110	1,300
1910	14,420	1,445
1920	14,259	1,379
1930	13,891	1,837
1940	13,196	1,869
1950	12,292	2,102

A TRIBUTE

This is the brief story—the story of Greenfield—“the loveliest of the plain.” Its verdant beauty suggests, beyond challenge, tranquility and peace. This our fathers and mothers made home, and home it is. Most people own their homes. The enchantment of that word home! It suggests fatherhood, motherhood, childhood, the ones we love. It is the seat of law and order and the things that are sacred. Somehow destiny has been kind to those whose home was and is Greenfield. No one can shun his destiny or forget his landmarks. Some left to seek their fortune elsewhere, but none ever forgot Greenfield, only to return again and again and with filial joy to recall the old and cherish the new. One hundred years have passed, and the “Festival of ’56” speaks eloquently of the past and inspires for the ages to come. The hands of the generations past are folded and at rest, their tasks are done. Their sons and daughters pledge to uphold that which is best in the traditions of the fathers. And they pray for devotion and strength to place that which is true and honest and just and reverent and pure and lovely with virtue into the hand and mind of tomorrow. Here—Greenfield—at thy hearth

“How often have I loitered o’er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene!”

1856 — GREENFIELD, IOWA — 1956



GREENFIELD THROUGH THE YEARS

- 1833 Iowa opened for settlement.
- 1838 Iowa Territory established in Burlington.
- 1846 Iowa becomes the 29th state of the Union.
Mormon trek through Iowa begins, eventually going through southern part of Adair County.
- 1849 Thomas Johnson, first settler arrives, followed by William McDonald in what is now Adair County.
- 1850 Another new settler, James R. Campbell, arrives.
- 1851 Adair County organized.
- 1854 First settlers, Hillin and Hodgson, locate on site now the location of Greenfield.
- 1855 County Seat established in Summerset (now Fontanelle)
- 1856 First Courthouse built.
Town of Greenfield laid out by Milton C. Munger.
- 1857 First building, Stage Coach Station, erected in Greenfield.
- 1858 First Methodist minister, Rev. J. M. Rust, preaches here.
- 1859 Greenfield Township established.
First general store opened.
First school held.
- 1860 Petition to locate County Seat in Greenfield shelved.
- 1861 Civil War breaks out. Eighty-eight from here enlist; 20 never return.
First public school built.
- 1865 Election defeats petition to locate County Seat in Greenfield.
- 1866 Efforts made to get railroad.
- 1867 Rock Island Railroad reaches north line of county.
- 1869 Petition to locate County Seat in Greenfield again defeated.

- 1874 Adair County voters locate County Seat in Greenfield.
Greenfield folks get overanxious; haul records and
furniture from Fontanelle to Greenfield. Forced to
return them.
Baptist Church organized.
Presbyterian Church organized.
- 1875 Supreme Court rules Greenfield legal County Seat.
First newspaper, Greenfield Transcript, started.
Adair County Bank opens.
Town of Greenfield becomes incorporated.
- 1877 Greenfield Independent School District created.
South Ward School built.
First grist mill begins operation.
- 1878 Father Foley conducts first Roman Catholic Mass.
Odd Fellows and Masons organize.
- 1879 Burlington Railroad reaches Greenfield.
First grain elevator built.
- 1880 Citizens Bank chartered.
- 1883 First creamery established.
North Ward school built.
First major fire destroys southeast quarter-block of
square, including Courthouse.
- 1887 Adair County Mutual Insurance Association formed.
- 1889 Adair County Free Press founded by E. J. Sidey.
- 1890 First electric lights in town.
- 1891 Present Courthouse built.
Adair County Fair Association organized.
- 1896 Public Library proposed—to no avail.
Telephone service begins here.
- 1898 Spanish-American War. Thirty enlistments in Adair
County; two die.
- 1900 Present Creamery organized.
- 1903 Adair County Medical Association organized.
- 1906 New High School built (present grade school building).
Roman Catholic congregation established and church
built.
Fire levels half-block including Heaton livery barn
east of square.

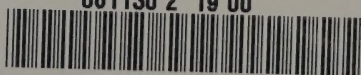
- 1908 Chautauqua comes to Greenfield.
- 1909 First waterworks. Standpipe.
- 1911 Town square paved and hitching chain removed.
- 1912 One mile of Greenfield streets paved.
- 1912 First Lutheran Congregation organized by Rev. Frederick Starke.
- 1913 Greenfield Savings Bank chartered.
Municipal Light Plant begins supplying electricity to Fontanelle.
- 1915 Public Library established.
- 1916 Public Library building erected.
- 1917 World War I breaks out. Adair County furnishes 706 men; 30 were killed.
- 1918 Lloyd Head, first war casualty from Adair County.
- 1919 "Lloyd Head Post" of American Legion organized.
- 1920 Greenfield businessmen build hotel at cost of \$60,000.
- 1920 First resident Lutheran pastor, Rev. Frederick Starke.
- 1923 Greenfield Golf Club organized.
- 1925 New High School building erected at cost of \$110,000.
- 1926 Volunteer Fire Department organized and fire truck acquired.
Ku Klux Klan dedicates Klavern (now site of hospital).
- 1927 Immanuel Lutheran Church built.
- 1929 Chautauqua's last stand, after 22 years.
City's deep well finished (deepest in state).
- 1930 Highway 92 (then No. 2) paved through Greenfield.
- 1931 Fairgrounds football field equipped with lights.
Natural gas franchise voted.
- 1934 Severe drought—thermometer reaches 113 degrees.
- 1935 Grand River Watershed Project begun with support from Service Club.
- 1936 Severe winter—25-below-zero average during February.
Lake Nodaway constructed.

- 1937 Athletic field acquired and equipped with lights.
- 1938 New modern fire truck acquired.
- 1939 First REA pole set at southwest edge of Greenfield.
- 1940 Soil Conservation District organized (fourth in state).
Country Club erects clubhouse.
New light plant and city hall completed.
- 1941 First Pan American Day attracts international attention
to Greenfield.
Municipal Swimming Pool constructed.
Highway 25 blacktopped south.
World War II breaks out at Pearl Harbor, December 7.
Adair County furnishes 1,380 soldiers; 44 gave
their lives.
- 1942 Dean Endres, first boy from Adair County to die
in the war.
- 1943 Seventh Day Adventist Church built.
- 1945 Airport bond issue defeated.
- 1946 Greenfield school acquires first two buses.
- 1948 Rural fire truck added to fire-fighting facilities.
- 1950 Adair County Memorial Hospital located here.
- 1951 New REA building dedicated.
- 1953 Sixty blocks of pavement added to city's streets.
- 1955 Election carries to enlarge Greenfield School District.
- 1956 Highway 25 paved to U. S. Highway 6.
"Festival of '56." Second century begins.

The HF Group

Indiana Plant

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7/25/2006

